



## **Transportation Advisory Committee**

Date: September 13, 2023

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

### **Minutes.**

#### **1. Administration.**

Members in Attendance: John Alessi (DPCD), John Aslanian, Beth Benedikt, Bill Copithorne (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Corey Rateau (APD), Scott Smith, James Stubbe, Laura Swan (Chair), and Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: none.

Members of Public in Attendance: Joy Ahearn, Phil Goff, Andy Greenspon, Ofer Mazor, Tim Ross, Paul Schlichtman, Petru Sofio, and Brianna Walsh.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled "Governor Charles Baker's 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law". The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

#### **B. Approval of July 12, 2023 Meeting Notes.**

Minutes for the Meeting of July 12, 2023, were approved.

#### **C. Town Day Table.**

Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC) invited TAC to host a joint table at Arlington Town Day on September 23, 2023. ABAC will bring a banner, easel, and printed materials; TAC will provide a tent and table through DPCD.

Scott Smith will provide an updated crash map of the Town for DPCD to print for display. Laura Swan will create a Sign-Up Genius for staffing the TAC table.

**D. Correspondence Sent/Received from July 7 to September 8, 2023.**

1. “Arlington High School Parking Concerns”, Letter from the Select Board to TAC, 07/17/23. The original correspondence was misplaced from earlier in the year. The letter writer noted many vehicles parked near AHS (for example, on Churchill Ave, Wildwood Ave, and Windermere Ave). Laura Swan asked why this letter was sent to TAC instead of APD regarding parking enforcement. Select Board Member Len Diggins responded that TAC Executive Committee can triage the letter and send it to APD; the Select Board errs on the side of caution in sending transportation-related matters to TAC. Corey Rateau added that the Select Board can contact APD directly regarding parking matters.

2. “Request: Additional Signage [at Downing Sq]”, Letter from the Select Board to TAC, 07/19/23. TAC sent a Memo on April 12 recommending additional signage at Downing Square after a motion was approved at the April meeting. TAC Executive Committee will inform the letter writer. Len Diggins added that he will aim to add it to the Select Board Agenda.

3. “Oxford St and Winter St safety Concerns”, Letter from the Select Board to TAC, 07/19/23. Discussed below.

4. “Request for crosswalk at Bow St - Minuteman Bikeway Corridor”, email to TAC from Aleksandr White, 9/7/23. Discussed below.

**2. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).**

There were no public comments.

**3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on the agenda).**

**A. Update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (John Alessi, DPCD).**

Medford St Bike Lanes. Select Board will be meeting later this month to vote on removing parking spots on Medford St to permit the planning of bike lanes. DPCD is aiming to complete the design and installation before the end of this construction season.

BlueBikes Stations: The Town and the City of Newton are having challenges on completing a contract with Lyft, which owns BlueBikes. As a result, the installation of two new Bluebikes Stations will be delayed until next spring. The Town will seek off-street locations for these new stations so that they can remain in place during the winter season.

Extend Bus Lanes on Mass Ave: The Town is working with the MBTA on setting the construction schedule for the bus-lane extension this season.

Subcommittee for updating the Bike Lane Matrix: Jeff Maxtutis is serving on the subcommittee to provide comments on the update of the Bike Lane Matrix. A draft will be shared with TAC for comment. DPCD is aiming for its completion by November.

Mystic Valley Parkway Path Steering Committee: Mystic River Watershed Association (MRWA) will be completing a conceptual design and land survey of Mystic Valley Parkway along the eastern shoreline of the Mystic Lakes in Winchester and Medford. MWRA is seeking steering committee member applications. John Alessi will send the application information to TAC and ABAC.

**B. Update from the Department of Public Works (Bill Copithorne, DPW).**

Warren St: Curb work between Medford St and Broadway is nearly complete. Resurfacing is scheduled for the end of the month.

Pavement Preservation Project in East Arlington is complete.

Arlington Heights: curb ramps are being updated on non-compliant ramps near Park Ave close to the Town line.

River St School Zone: DPW received the speed feedback equipment from MassDOT and is scheduling its installation.

Lake St and Minuteman Bikeway Light: Petru Sofio asked about changes in the signal timing. Bill Copithorne and Corey Rateau responded that the bikeway signal timing was revisited and updated in August. This week is the first trial to examine the effects of the changes, which were instituted to facilitate safe motor-vehicle turning movements and reduce congestion at the Brooks Ave and Lake St intersection. The signal-timing change is limited to the morning school drop off; Scott Smith recommended that the coordinated signal-timing change begin at 7am instead of 6am to reduce noncompliance. Phil Goff of EALS commented that drivers on Brook St have no space to move under the previous signal timing and understands the reason to change it.

**C. Update from the Police Department (Corey Rateau, APD).**

Paul Revere Rd: APD has received speeding complaints on Paul Revere Rd between Mass Ave and Park Ave. Traffic data corroborated vehicle speeds being higher than desired.

Parking near AHS: APD is ticketing parking violators.

Sign Maintenance with DPW: The Stop sign on Rawson Rd and Warren St will be moved in front of the tree near the corner to improve its visibility; a stop bar also will be painted. A missing No Parking sign will be installed on Lockeland Ave.

School Reopening: training and staffing of traffic supervisors. Reviewing complaints of parent/guardian drop off at Hardy School (Lake St and Brooks Ave). Discussion with SRTS on School Zones (Chandler St, Lake St, and River St).

InControl Driving School: APD will be applying for a grant to send 40 – 50 drivers to InControl Driving School following the success of last year's program. There will be a lottery system to choose participants including spots reserved for lower income participants.

#### **4. New Business: Bow St.**

John Alessi received a direct email from a resident near Bow St and the Minuteman Bikeway seeking installation of a crosswalk across Bow St. Bill Copithorne commented that paving and curbs on Bow St were reconstructed in 2018, after which DPW received comments about no crosswalk near the area. DPW had examined installing a crosswalk near this location and concluded that there was no feasible way to add an accessible sidewalk crossing near this location: Bow St curves at this location and limits driver visibility, and numerous driveway curb cuts impedes installation.

Corey Rateau and Scott Smith agreed about the challenges for installing a crosswalk near this location. They inquired about pedestrian movements in the area.

Laura Swan and Shoji Takahashi will conduct pedestrian counts at Bow St near the Minuteman Bikeway.

#### **5. Discussion: Mass Ave and Appleton St.**

On September 27, the design consultant, Stantec, will present an updated conceptual design of the Mass Ave / Appleton St Safety and Accessibility Project for the Select Board to approve. The previous iteration was presented in March and this version incorporates public comments and discussions with stakeholders. The timing of this meeting and vote is to permit the use of a grant from MassWorks for finalizing the plans and construction.

The documentation from Stantec includes its recommendations, public comments, and compromises. The compromises in this design compared to the previous iteration include: (a) an additional 11 parking spots (total of 42 spots; currently 81 spots) near Dunkin Donuts; (b) Appleton Pl will now be one-way for motor-vehicle traffic instead of closed to motor-vehicle traffic; (c) Mass Ave at Forest St and Burton St will have three crosswalks with dedicated phasing instead of four crosswalks; (d) east of Burton St, there will be a parking-protected, elevated bike lanes.

Bill Copithorne asked if the design required utility poles to-be moved, as it can be problematic to relocate them. John Alessi will check with Stantec to ensure constructability.

In response to a question from John Aslanian, John Alessi responded that curbing and choice of street-level or elevated bike lanes can be decided at a later stage. The upcoming Select Board vote is for parking and street structure concepts. Jeff Maxtutis asked if the Town was committed to snow removal in the bike lanes; John Alessi and Bill Copithorne will check on snow removal.

Scott Smith commented that visibility of eastbound cyclists traveling downhill near the Dunkin Donuts might be hindered by large vehicles parking on Mass Ave. Phil Goff expressed concern on the possible conflict of the bus stop and bike lane at Appleton St. In neighboring cities, railings have been installed near bus stops to separate the spaces.

#### **6. Update: Thompson School (Regis Rd).**

Regis Rd, which is a private way recently repaved as part of the Town's Betterment Process, is a one-way street moving traffic towards Thompson School. The Town added a stop sign on the utility pole at the intersection of Everett St. Everett St is scheduled to-be paved next year. DPW will examine curb changes at the intersection.

#### **7. Update: Chestnut St Improvements.**

Heavy construction such as curbs, sidewalks, and paving on Chestnut St have been completed. Striping and lane markings will be completed pending suitable weather conditions. RRFB equipment will be arriving this month and then will be installed.

#### **8. Update: Summer St and Sunset Rd.**

The curb-ramp contractor is presenting working in Arlington Heights. Two other locations, including Summer St and Sunset Rd, are scheduled for completion this construction season.

#### **9. Discussion: Highland Ave and High Haith Rd.**

Highland Ave serves as a connector between Route 2 and Mass Ave with a speed limit of 25 mph. It passes near Menotomy Rocks Park and has a steep slope. At the intersection of High Haith Rd, there are pedestrian signs, painted crosswalk with yield to pedestrian lines ("shark teeth"), roadway bollard, and pedestrian flags. The sidewalks do not have detectable panels. A retaining wall

and utility pole obstruct drivers' view of a pedestrian ahead sign. Consider moving it for visibility. Corey Rateau responded that MUTCD guidelines should be followed for advance warning pedestrian sign placement.

Laura Swan observed heavy auto traffic but did not conduct peak hour counts. The letter writer noted speeding, however speeding did not seem excessive during observations.

Melissa Laube commented that TAC examined this location about 10 years ago. APD conducted two counts, and speed was not an issue. Corey Rateau added that a directed patrol was set up more recently, and trained officers did not detect excessive speeding.

Based on photos of the location, Jeff Maxtutis said that crosswalk signs might be older signs. He recommended replacing them with new retroreflective signs and adding vertical reflective strips, which are much easier to see at night and low cost.

#### **10. Discussion: Wachusett Ave and Appleton St.**

Jim Stubbe provided a short background on the 6-way intersection, noting that eastbound Appleton St does not have a stop sign. The complaints were on vehicles not coming to a complete stop and a wide expanse for pedestrians to cross.

Numerous observations were conducted of this intersection. Crash data showed four crashes in last 20 years; the last two crashes were in 2017.

From observations and feedback, the working recommendation is to add a stop sign to eastbound Appleton St. with a Stop Ahead sign, and All Way plaques added to the stop signs of the intersection. The Town should consider changes in geometry to reduce pedestrian crossing distances the next time DPW is scheduled to resurface the intersection.

Corey Rateau said that the intersection should meet the warrants of MUTCD for all-way stop. Jim Stubbe will look at the warrants and check the compliance for this intersection.

#### **11. Discussion: Jason St / Hillsdale Rd**

Jim Stubbe provided a brief background of Jason St near Hillsdale Rd, which is near Menotomy Rocks Park. Jason St connects to Route 2. There are no marked crosswalks at this intersection; there is a marked crosswalk across Jason St at Brantwood Rd approximately 120' away. The roadway was resurfaced recently.

Multiple observations were made over different periods. Traffic was well behaved at the Menotomy Rocks Park crosswalk. The crossing at Hillsdale Rd was not used, except by dog owners parking their cars. Pedestrians did not have problems crossing.

The recommendation is no action at this time. A vote will be brought at the next TAC meeting.

## **12. Update: Broadway/Rawson Rd Crosswalk.**

Scott Smith summarized the recommendations: move the Rawson Rd stop bar closer to the intersection, and square the curb geometry at Foster St (across Broadway opposite Rawson Rd).

Corey Rateau added that the Town consider eliminating the parking space on Rawson Rd at the Broadway corner as the road is narrow and the spot causes confusion.

Scott Smith and John Aslanian will draft a Memo for vote at the next meeting.

## **13. Update: Winter St and Oxford St.**

John Aslanian attended meetings between neighbors and Lesley Ellis School. Notably, Lesley Ellis School changed its policy on student pickup and drop off, which has improved the traffic situation. However, high motor-vehicle speeds are still an issue for the residents.

In discussion, residents have identified for specific areas for improvement: a few locations for signs to-be added; pickup and drop off parking for Learn to Grow preschool at N Union St and Broadway; consider limiting northbound exit onto N Union St from Dunkin Donuts parking lot at certain times of day. Also, residents having identified some vehicles being stored overnight and not being moved.

Laura Swan asked if the vehicle queue to Lesley Ellis School on Winter St is still problematic. John Aslanian responded that Lesley Ellis has instituted a new process for streamlining student pickup and drop off. Paint markings separate and direct travel modes. Lesley Ellis staff also are assisting in directing traffic. He noted that staggering release times might improve the situation more.

Importantly, Lesley Ellis School construction is scheduled for next year. The construction might create traffic challenges in the neighborhood.

**9. Adjourn.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.